

THE FINISHER



ALL-NEW
MARVEL
NOW!

EDMONDSON
GERADS 003

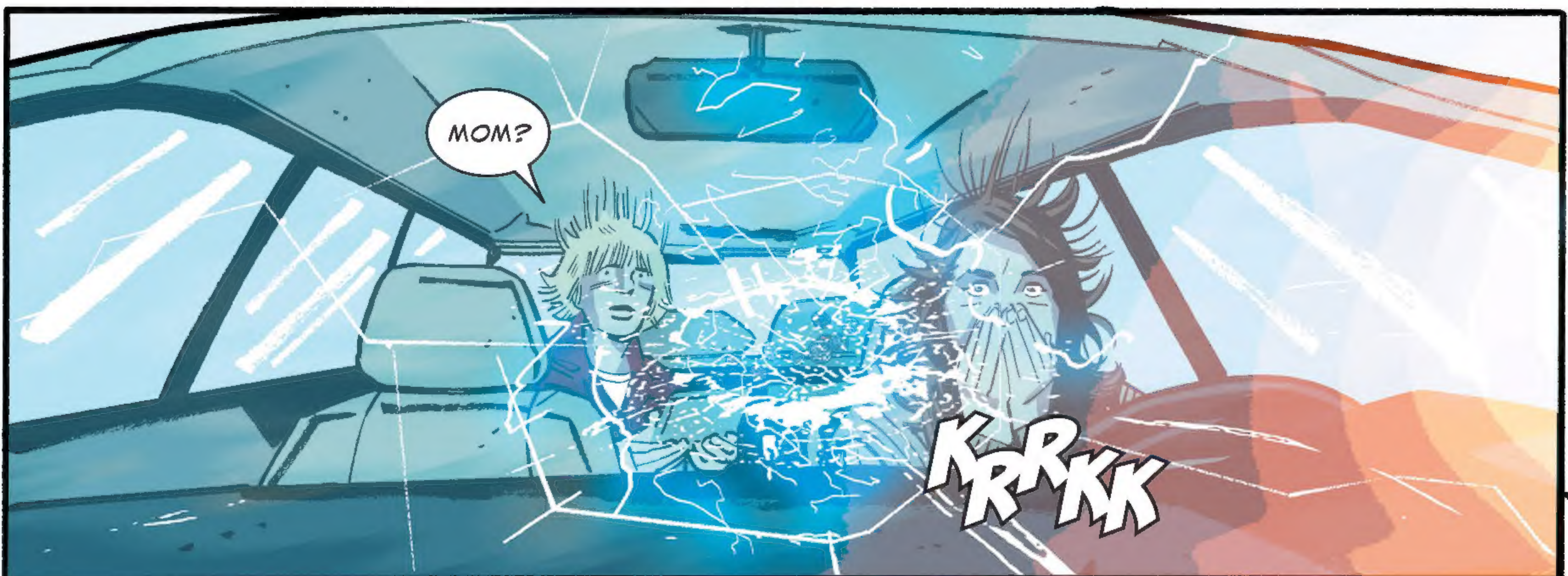
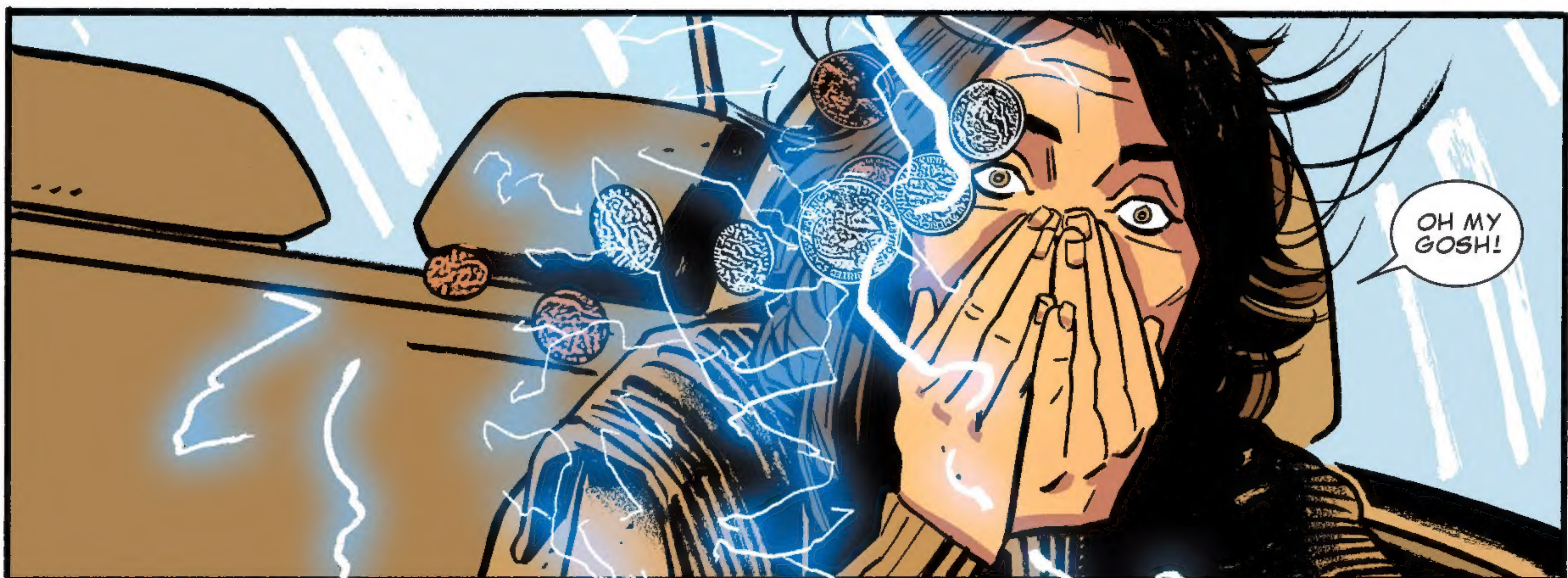
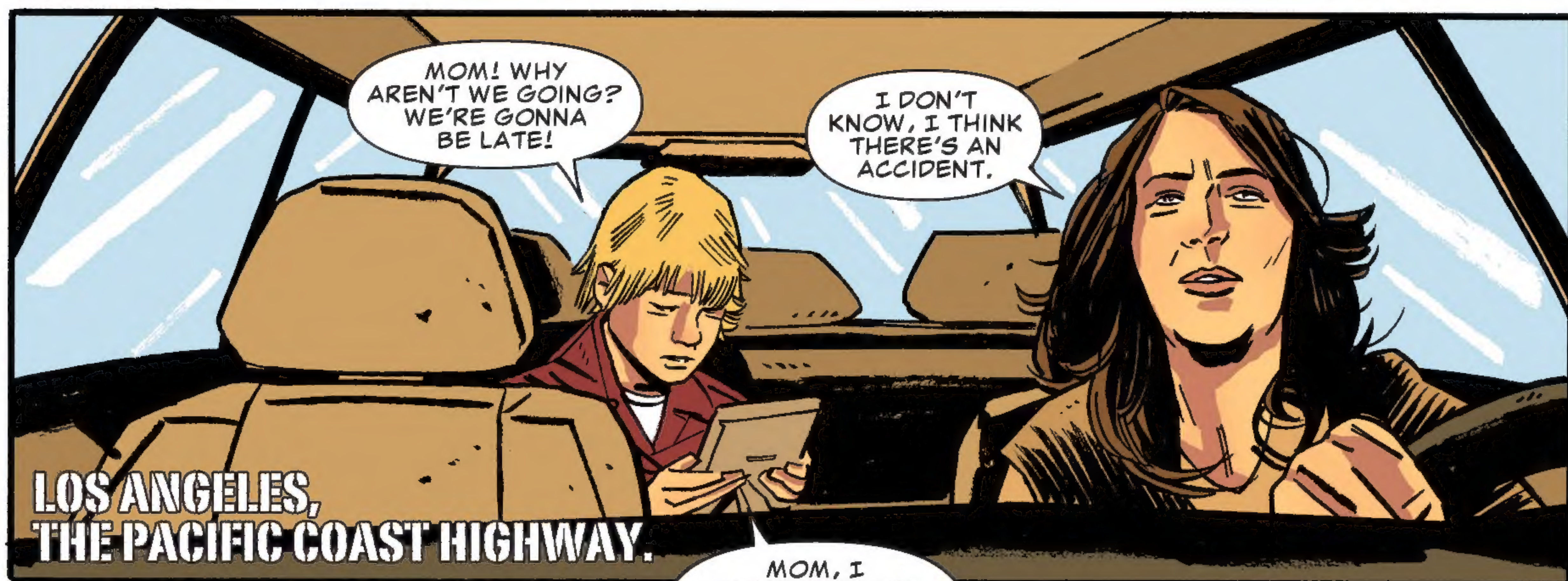
FRANK CASTLE was once a decorated Marine officer, an upstanding citizen and family man. Then his family was violently taken from him when they were accidentally killed in a mob hit. From that day on, Frank Castle shed his old identity and became a force of cold, calculated retribution and vigilantism known as...

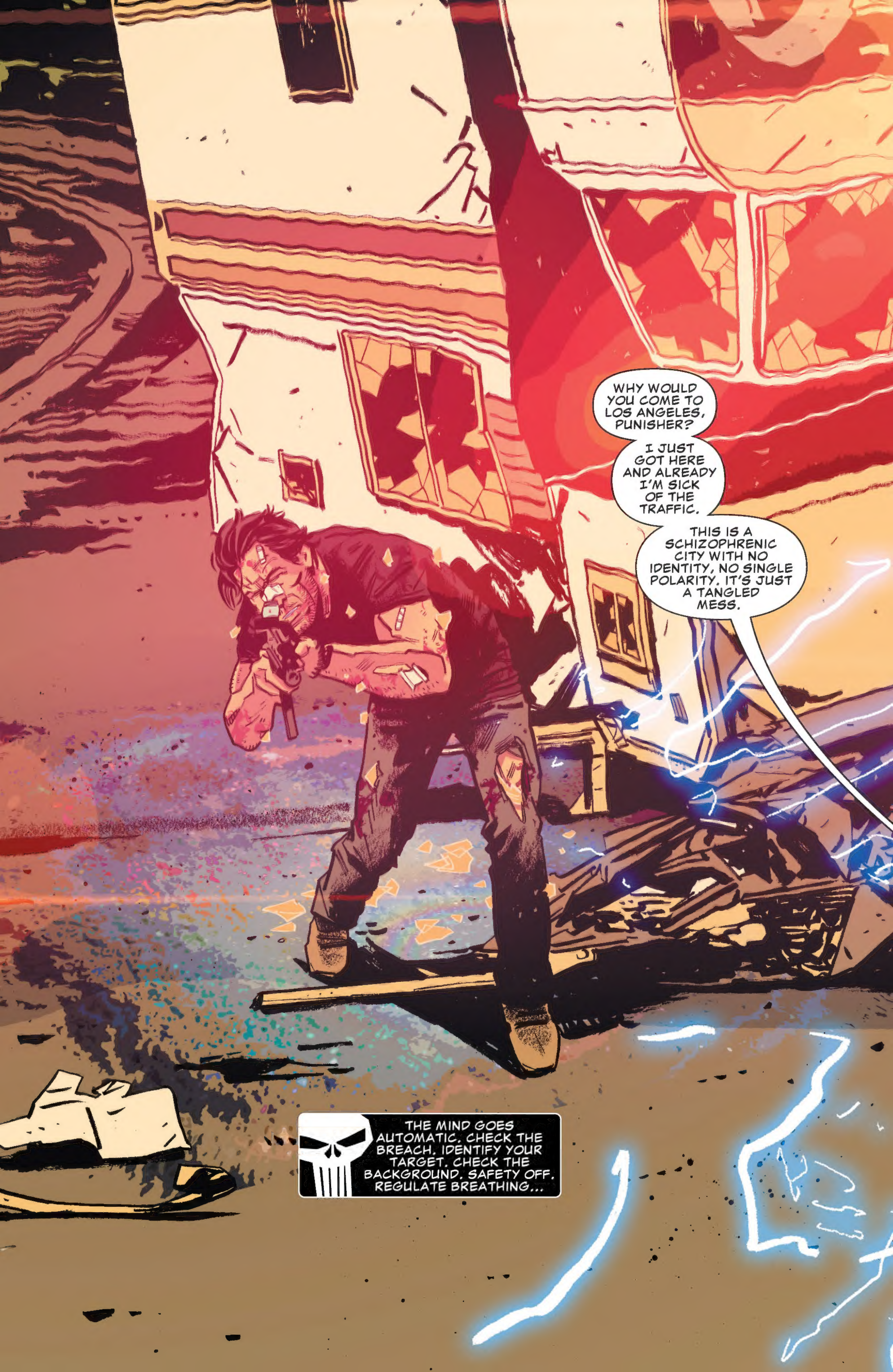
— THE PUNISHER —

PREVIOUSLY

A trail of drugs, corruption and terror perpetrated by the Dos Soles gang led Frank Castle away from his New York City home to Los Angeles. The Dos Soles had plans for L.A. that included a horrific chemical weapon, but as Frank pursued the gangsters with the help of a military contact named Tuggs, the hunter was himself being hunted. An elite military strike force, the new HOWLING COMMANDOS, had Frank in their sights. With their noose tightening, Frank ran up against the Dos Soles hired muscle, the super villain ELECTRO!







WHY WOULD YOU COME TO LOS ANGELES, PUNISHER?

I JUST GOT HERE AND ALREADY I'M SICK OF THE TRAFFIC.

THIS IS A SCHIZOPHRENIC CITY WITH NO IDENTITY, NO SINGLE POLARITY. IT'S JUST A TANGLED MESS.

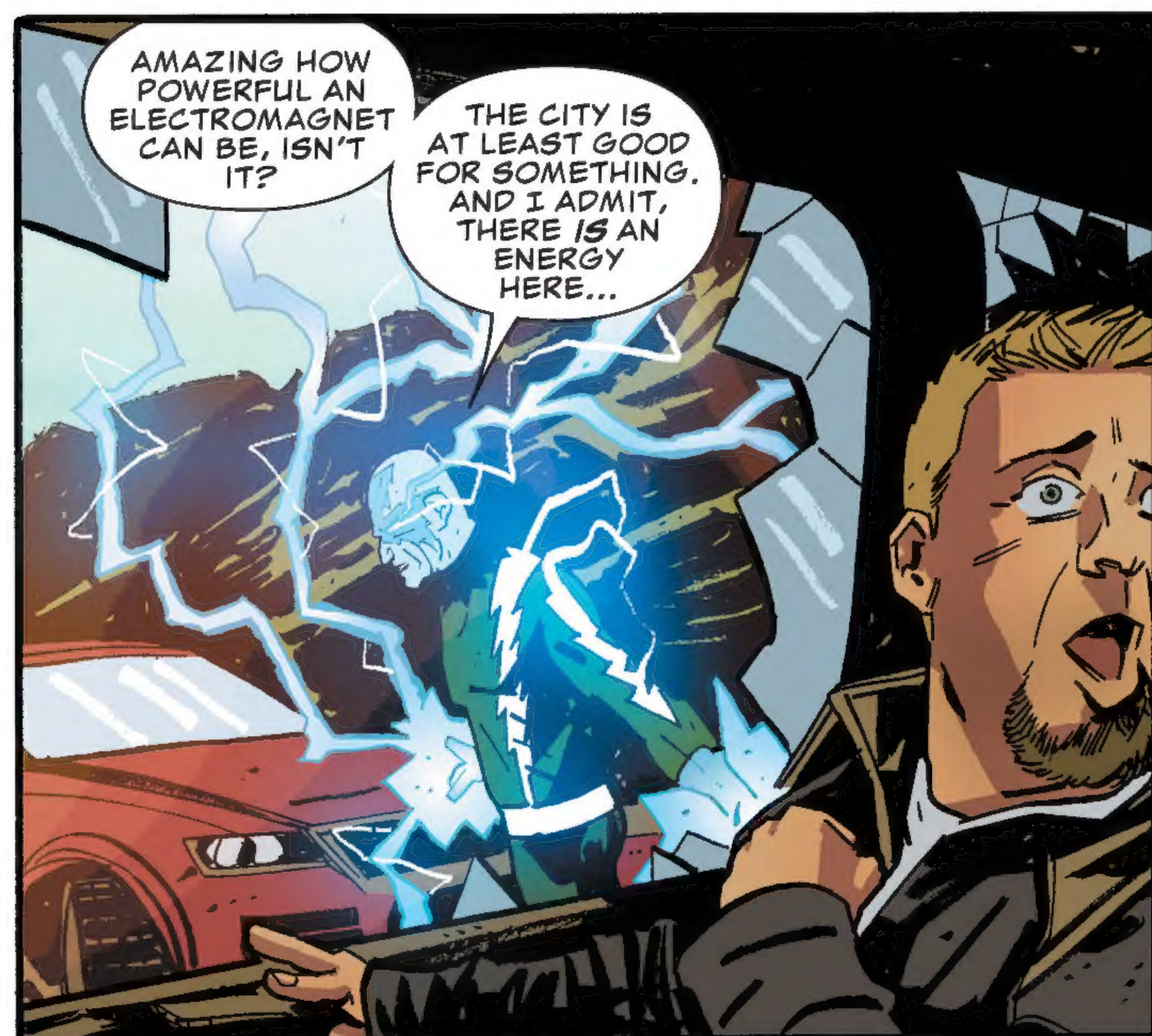
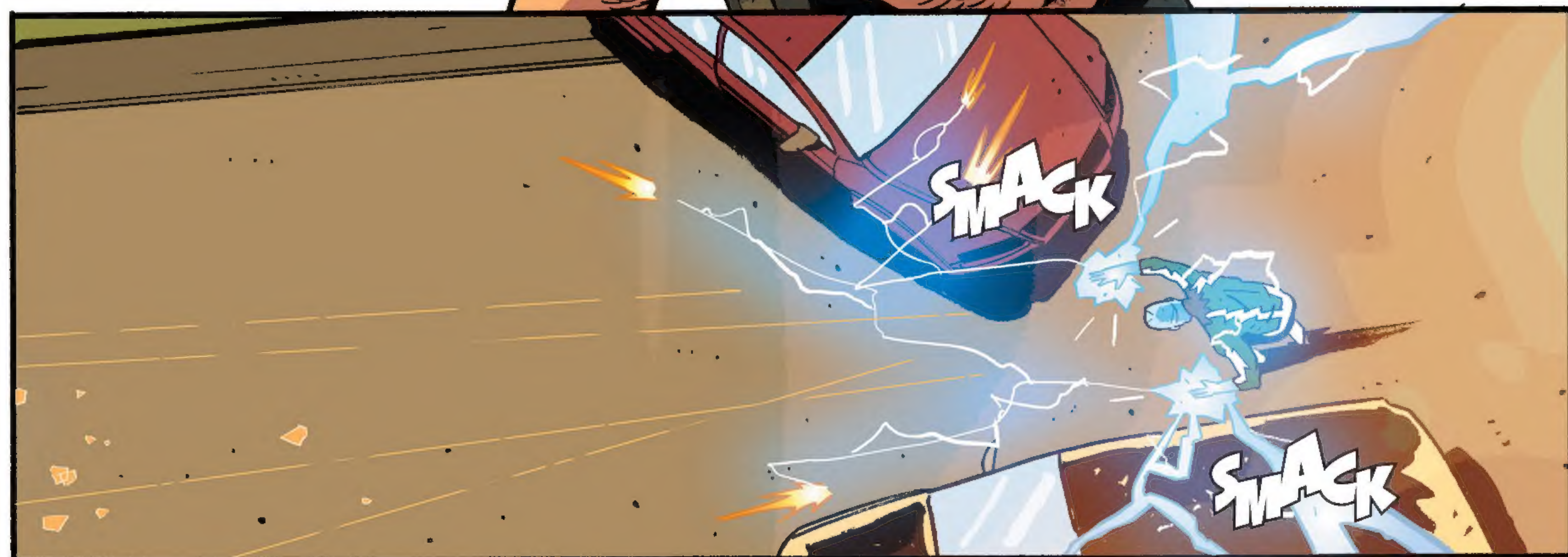


THE MIND GOES AUTOMATIC. CHECK THE BREACH. IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET. CHECK THE BACKGROUND. SAFETY OFF. REGULATE BREATHING...



PUT THE BALL ON
THE TARGET.

FIRE, FIRE,
FIRE.

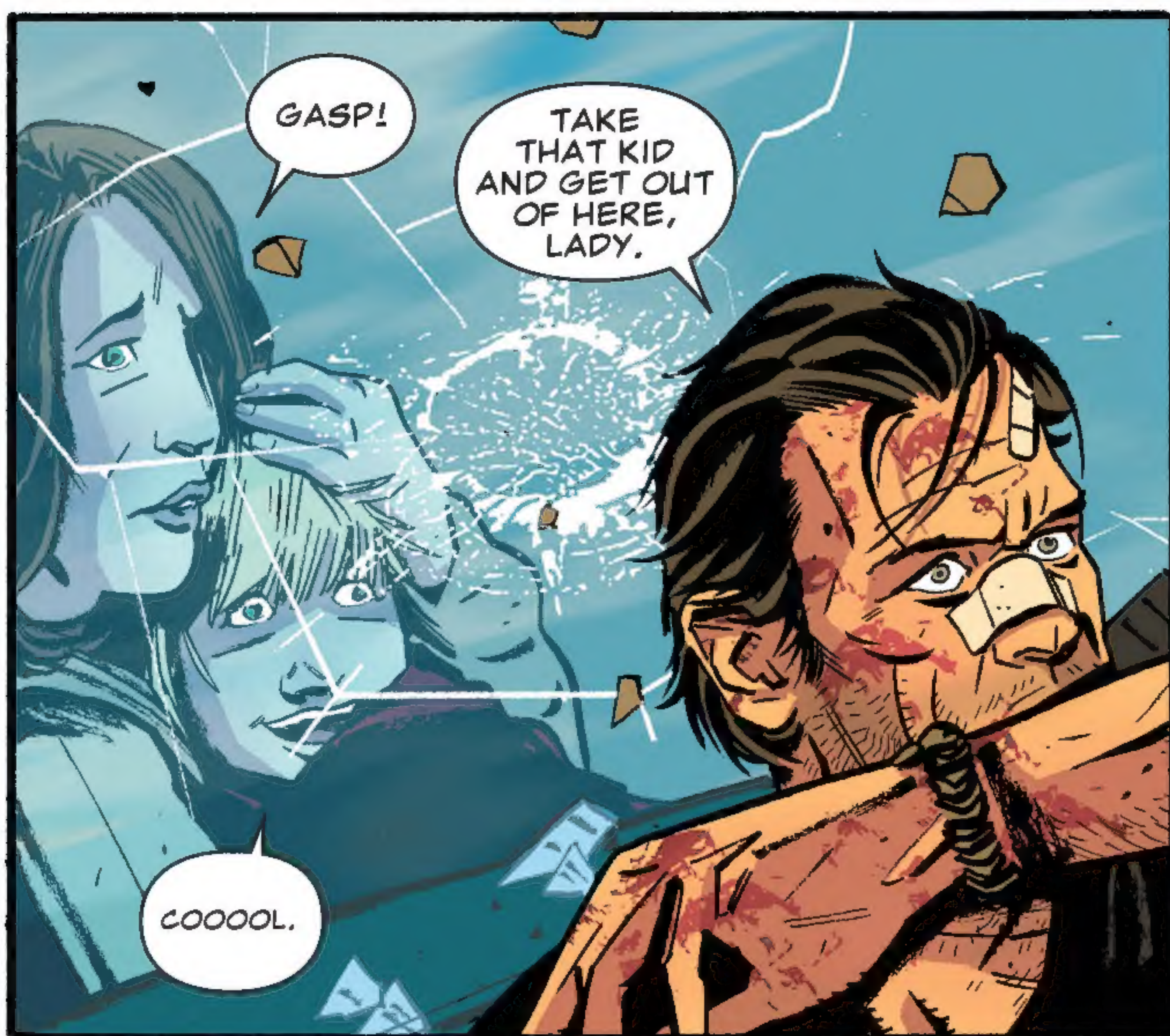


AMAZING HOW
POWERFUL AN
ELECTROMAGNET
CAN BE, ISN'T
IT?

THE CITY IS
AT LEAST GOOD
FOR SOMETHING.
AND I ADMIT,
THERE IS AN
ENERGY
HERE...



CAN'T
YOU FEEL
IT?





THE MIND IS AUTOMATIC.
THE TRAINING IS HERE.
AND RETREAT IS SOMETIMES
THE BEST OPTION.

YOU CAN'T BEAT A
PLAN WITH NO PLAN.



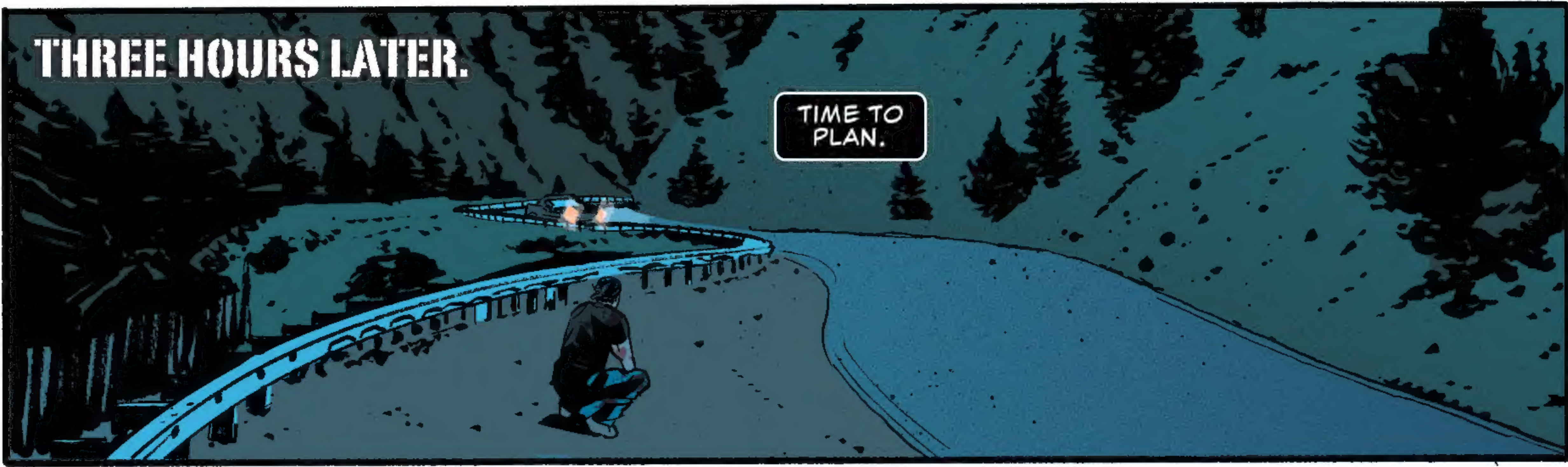
AND I CAN'T RISK
CIVILIAN LIVES.



THIS
CITY'S GOING
TO BURN,
CASTLE!

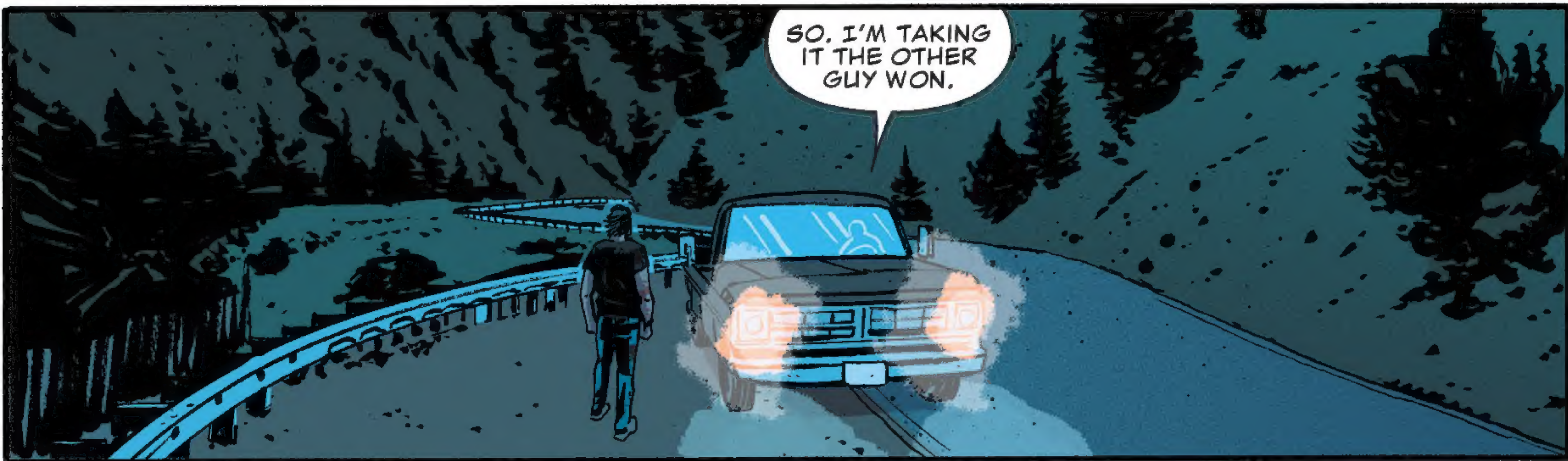
YOU
CAN BURN
WITH IT.

TIME TO
REGROUP.



THREE HOURS LATER.

TIME TO PLAN.



SO, I'M TAKING IT THE OTHER GUY WON.



I WAS LUCKY TO ESCAPE, YOU'LL SEE IT ON THE NEWS.

THANKS FOR COMING.

I BROUGHT A FRIEND.



LOOT, HOW'S THE LEG, BUD?

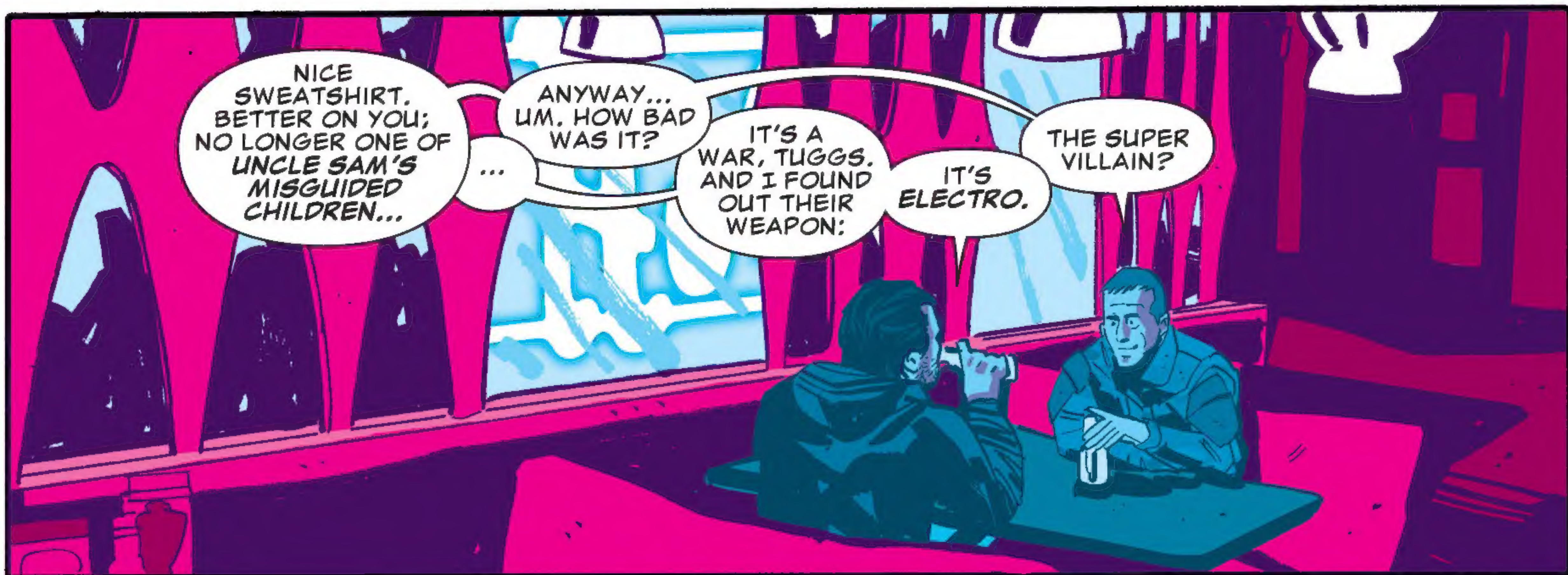
THE LEG IS FINE, EVERYTHING'S FINE, EXCEPT HE EATS TOO MUCH.



SO I'M THINKING YOU OWE ME SOME REIMBURSEMENT FOR CHOW, WHICH, BY THE WAY, THEY DON'T MAKE FOR COYOTES. NOT THAT I ASKED THE GIRL AT THE PET STORE--

WE CAN DISCUSS THAT LATER. WE HAVE MORE PRESSING THINGS.

LET'S FIND SOMEWHERE TO TALK.



NICE SWEATSHIRT. BETTER ON YOU; NO LONGER ONE OF **UNCLE SAM'S MISGUIDED CHILDREN...**

ANYWAY... UM. HOW BAD WAS IT?

IT'S A WAR, TUGGS. AND I FOUND OUT THEIR WEAPON:

IT'S **ELECTRO**.

THE SUPER VILLAIN?



YES. AND HE'S KEEPING DOWN LOW. DOS SOLES MUST HAVE FIGURED I WAS A THREAT AND HAD HIM TAKE ME OUT, BUT I CAN GUARANTEE YOU HE'S HERE FOR ANOTHER REASON.

I HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT THAT REASON IS.



BUT YOU STILL THINK THE CHEMICAL WEAPON IS INVOLVED?

YES. MEXICO WAS A DRY RUN.

HOW ELECTRO FITS IN, I DON'T KNOW.




WHAT DOES THE CHEMICAL DO, EXACTLY?

ALL I LOOKED INTO WAS WHERE IT CAME FROM...

IT'S AWFUL. I CAN TELL YOU THAT MUCH...

IT KILLED EVERYONE, AND NOT PAINLESSLY. I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF IT'S RELEASED IN AN URBAN AREA.





I'VE GOT TO
FIND THEIR SUPPLY
AND DESTROY IT. OR
STOP THEM FROM
TRIGGERING ITS
RELEASE.

SO FIRST
I'M GOING TO FIND
SOMEONE WHO KNOWS
WHERE THE DOS SOLES
HAVE THIS STUFF, AND
I'M GOING TO GET
HIM TO TELL ME.




COVERED
HIS TRACKS
PRETTY
WELL.



RADIO
IN, RUBY
RED. WHAT
HAVE YOU
GOT?

NADA, MYERS.
THIS "TUGGS"
NEVER TAKES HIS
OWN VEHICLE TO
MEET CASTLE.
FIGURES.

SIDEWINDER IS
LOOKING THROUGH
CASTLE'S SERVICE
RECORDS RIGHT
NOW.



HE WAS
THE PRIDE OF
THE MARINES.
DECORATED WITH
EVERY COMMENDATION.
BUT HALF HIS FILE
IS REDACTED.



ABOVE OUR
CLEARANCE?

NOTHING
IS ABOVE
THE HOWLIN'
COMMANDOS,
MOFFLY. WE ARE
THE SHADOWS'
SHADOWS.

I SAID LET'S
GET RID OF HIM. I
DIDN'T SAY LET'S
JEOPARDIZE THE ENTIRE
OPERATION BY
THROWING CARS
AROUND THE
HIGHWAY.

SUBTLETY
IS NOT MY STYLE.
NEITHER AM I
YOUR...LACKEY.



I APPRECIATE
THAT YOU ARE WILLING
TO HELP US ACCOMPLISH
THIS THING. I'M GRATEFUL
THAT A.I.M. COULD SET
UP THIS--THIS--
PARTNERSHIP.

AND WHILE
THE PUNISHER IS
IN THE WAY, WE CAN'T
JEOPARDIZE THE
WHOLE FOR A SPAT
WITH HIM.

DON'T
UNDERESTIMATE
YOUR ENEMIES,
GUILLERMO. DOS SOLES
ARE POWERFUL, BUT
YOU ARE NOT YET
UNTOUCHABLE.



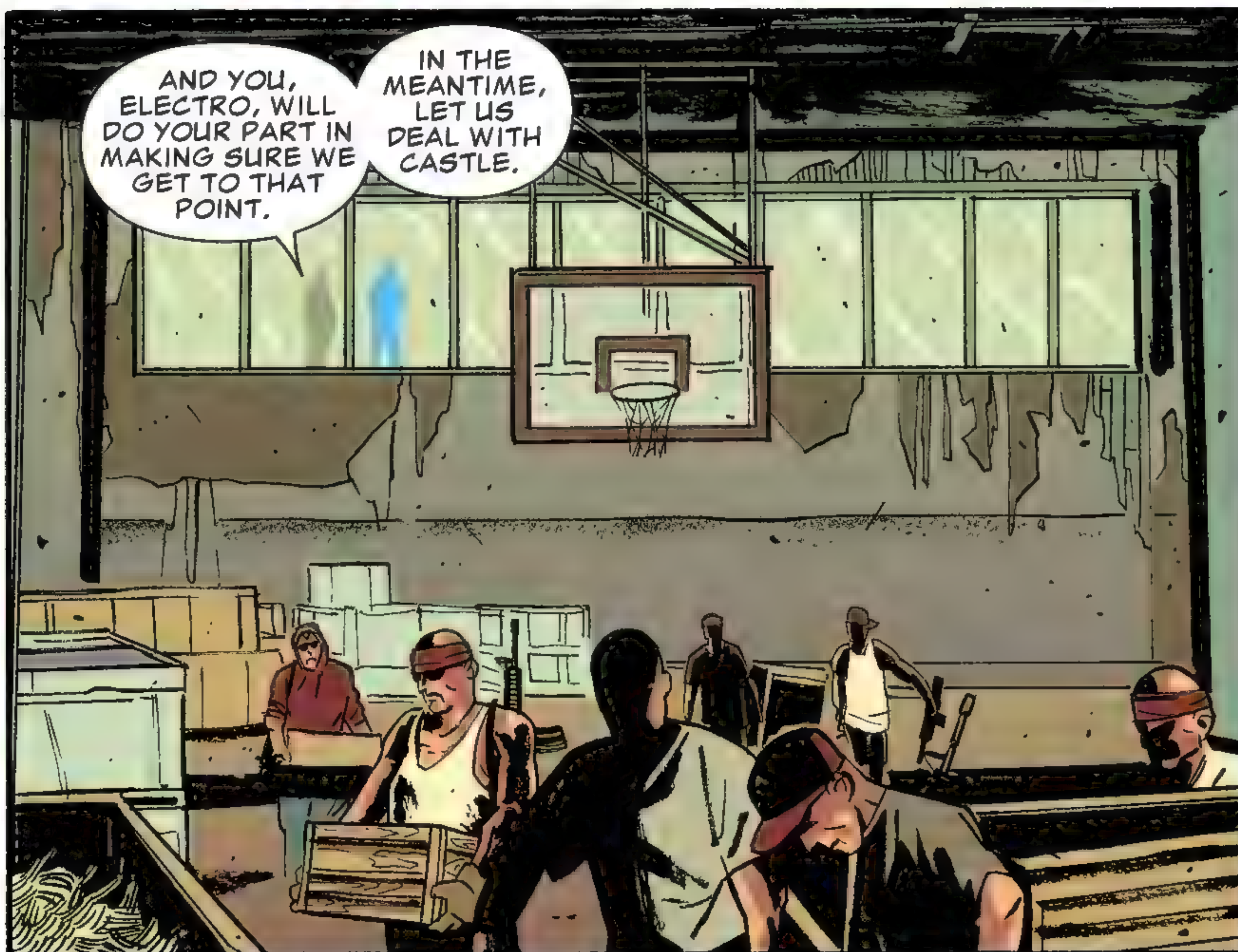
WE ONLY
HAVE TO GET
THROUGH THE
NEXT FEW
WEEKS.

THEN WE WILL BE
UNTOUCHABLE.



AND YOU,
ELECTRO, WILL
DO YOUR PART IN
MAKING SURE WE
GET TO THAT
POINT.

IN THE
MEANTIME,
LET US
DEAL WITH
CASTLE.





I SAID
I DON'T
KNOW!



I DON'T
KNOW!



BUT
YOU *DO* KNOW,
RUIZ.

THE ONLY
REASON YOU'RE
ALIVE IS YOU'VE
TOLD ME THINGS
BEFORE.

I DON'T
KNOW THIS
TIME! I DON'T
KNOW THE
ANSWER.



I
START
WITH
MY
FISTS.



YOU WANT
TO FEEL
WHAT COMES
NEXT?
OR
WHAT COMES
AFTER THIS?

HERE'S A
HINT: YOU'LL END
UP STUCK IN A CHAIR
WITH WHEELS WHEN
I'M DONE WITH YOU.

OKAY,
OKAY, LISTEN
TO ME! STOP!
LISTEN!



JUST--LISTEN. IT'S
DIFFERENT THIS TIME.
WHAT THE BOSSES ARE
DOING, IT'S NOT LIKE
IT'S DRUGS, OR
GUNS. IT'S BIG.

EVERYONE'S
SCARED TO
TALK.

YOU
SHOULD
BE AFRAID
NOT TO.



OKAY.
LISTEN. I'LL
TELL YOU. IT
DIDN'T COME FROM
ME, THOUGH. YOU
GOTTA DO ME
THAT ONE.

THIS
IS HEAVY
STUFF...

I'M
WAITING
ON AN
ANSWER,
RUIZ.



I'LL TELL
YOU WHERE
THEY'RE SET
UP.

IT'S UP
TO YOU TO
FIGURE OUT
WHAT THEY'RE
DOING
THERE.



ALL OKAY, SAMMY? YOU SEEM QUIET TONIGHT.

I'M GOOD, LOU, THANKS. JUST A BIT BEAT DOWN.

IT'S NOT JUST STONES AND SLINGSHOTS OUT THERE. IT'S **ESCALATION**. THE CROOKS ON THE STREET, THEY FEEL MORE AND MORE BOLD WITH EACH COP KILLED.

...TRACKING UNUSUAL STORM PATTERNS IN THE LOS ANGELES AREA, WE MAY BE IN FOR SOME RAIN IN THE NEXT WEEK...



THANK GOD FOR THE PUNISHER, HUH?

HE SAVED MY LIFE. THERE I WAS, TRYING TO TALK LIKE A COP TO SOME CROOKS WHO COULDN'T CARE LESS IF I WAS THE CHIEF OF POLICE.

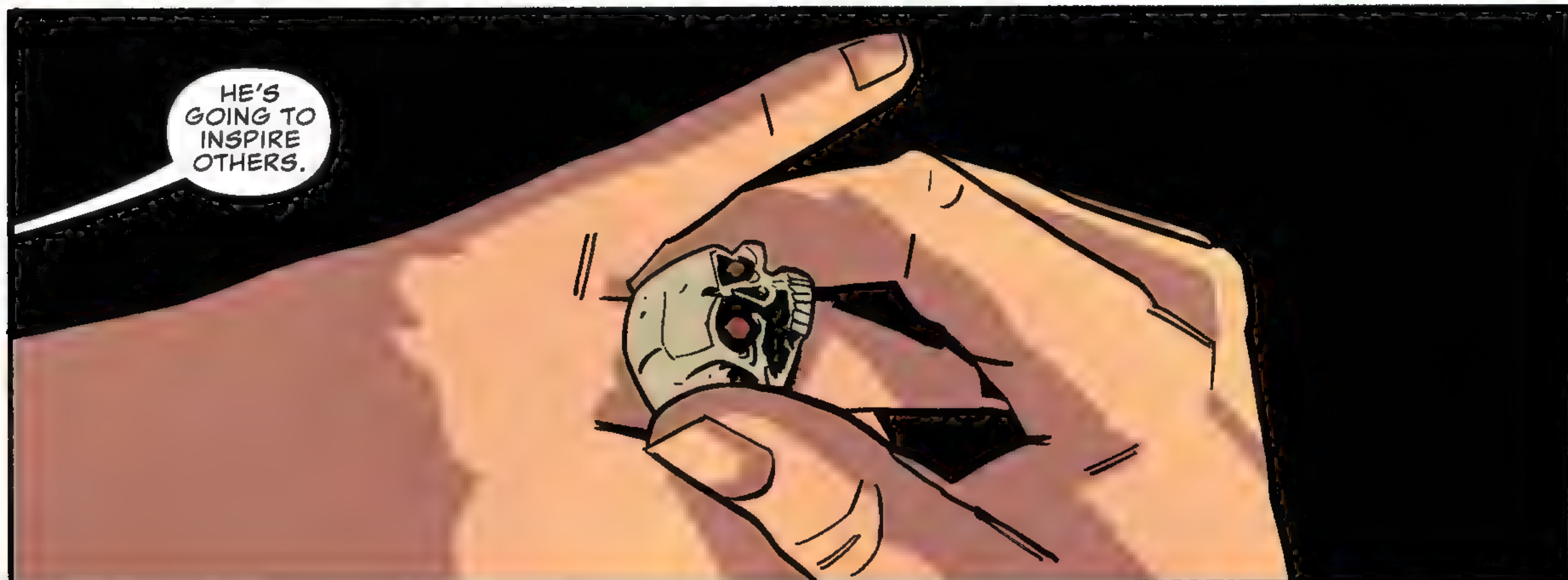
THE LAWS-- THE OLD RULES, LOU--THEY JUST DON'T APPLY ANYMORE.

THE PUNISHER HAS THE RIGHT IDEA.

HE'S GETTING RESULTS.



HE'S GOING TO INSPIRE OTHERS.





TO SERVE AND PROTECT.

THE PUBLIC HAS A FUNDAMENTAL MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE ROLE AND CAPABILITY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT.



IT'S MAINLY THE "PROTECT" PART THE PUBLIC PUTS TOO MUCH FAITH IN.

THE POLICE DO NOT PROTECT. THEY CANNOT PREVENT. THEY CAN'T BE THERE BEFORE THE GUN IS FIRED. THEY CAN ONLY CHASE THE THUG WHO FIRED IT.



ONLY A FOOL PUTS HIS SAFETY IN SOMEONE ELSE'S HANDS.

ONLY A FOOL EXPECTS THAT THE AUTHORITIES CAN MAKE HIM SAFE.



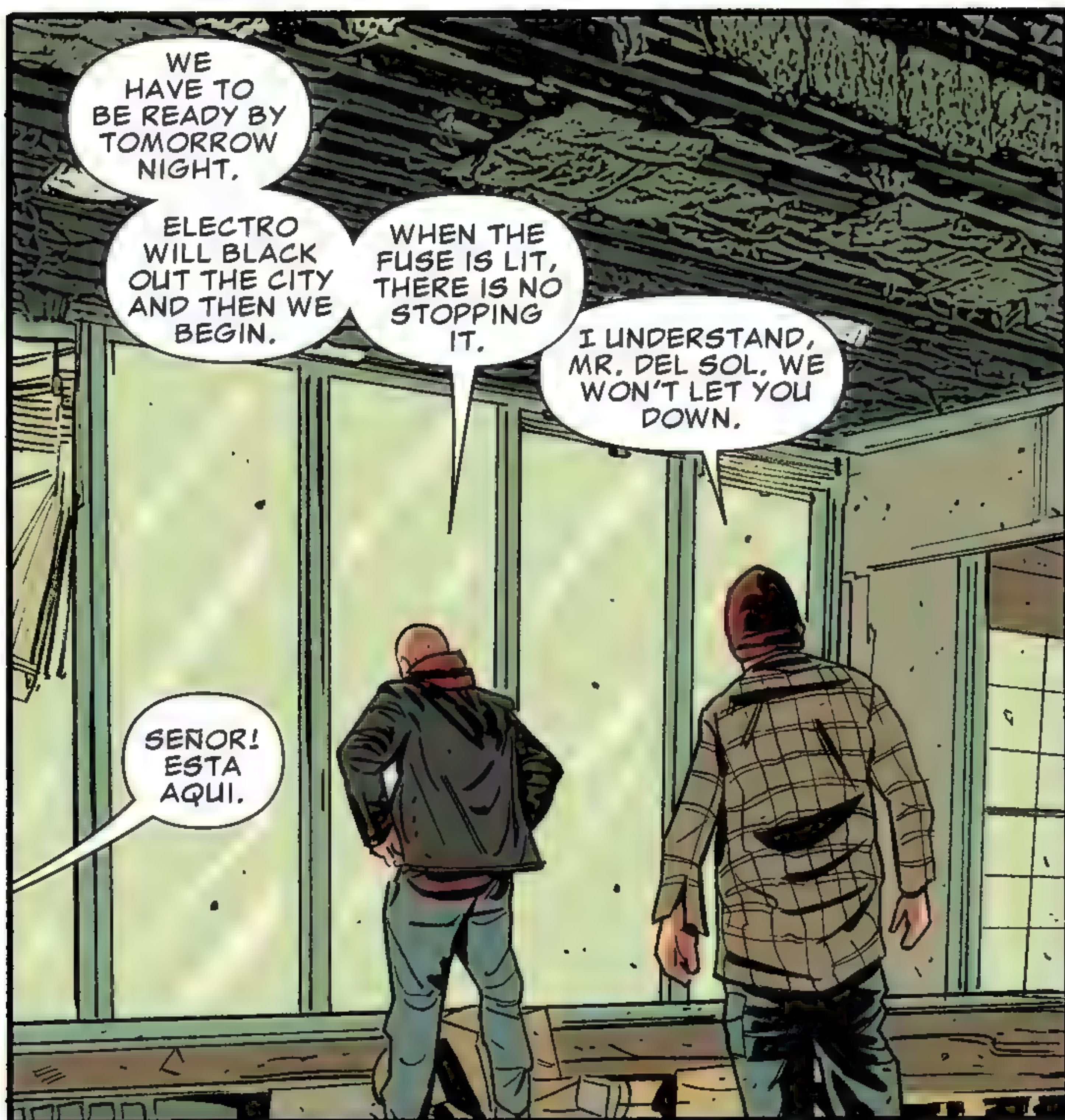
AND IF I EVER NEEDED MORE PROOF, HERE IT IS...



A FOREIGN ARMY IS IN L.A.'S VERY BACKYARD, AND THE AUTHORITIES HAVE NO IDEA.

...MOVING AS QUICKLY AS WE CAN, MR. DEL SOL.

WE'LL BE READY TO START MOVING THE CANISTERS BY MORNING.



WE
HAVE TO
BE READY BY
TOMORROW
NIGHT.

ELECTRO
WILL BLACK
OUT THE CITY
AND THEN WE
BEGIN.

WHEN THE
FUSE IS LIT,
THERE IS NO
STOPPING
IT.

I UNDERSTAND,
MR. DEL SOL, WE
WON'T LET YOU
DOWN.

SEÑOR!
ESTA
AQUI.



PERIMETER IS
BREACHED.

ARE
THE MEN IN
PLACE?
AWAITING
OUR ORDER.

THEY
DON'T NEED
MY ORDER.
GO! GO!



THE WORST
FEELING ON THE
BATTLEFIELD IS
THIS ONE:



THE FEELING
THAT YOU HAVE
UNDERESTIMATED
YOUR ENEMY.

IT IS A COLD WASH
ACROSS YOUR SKIN.
LIKE BLOOD LOSS.

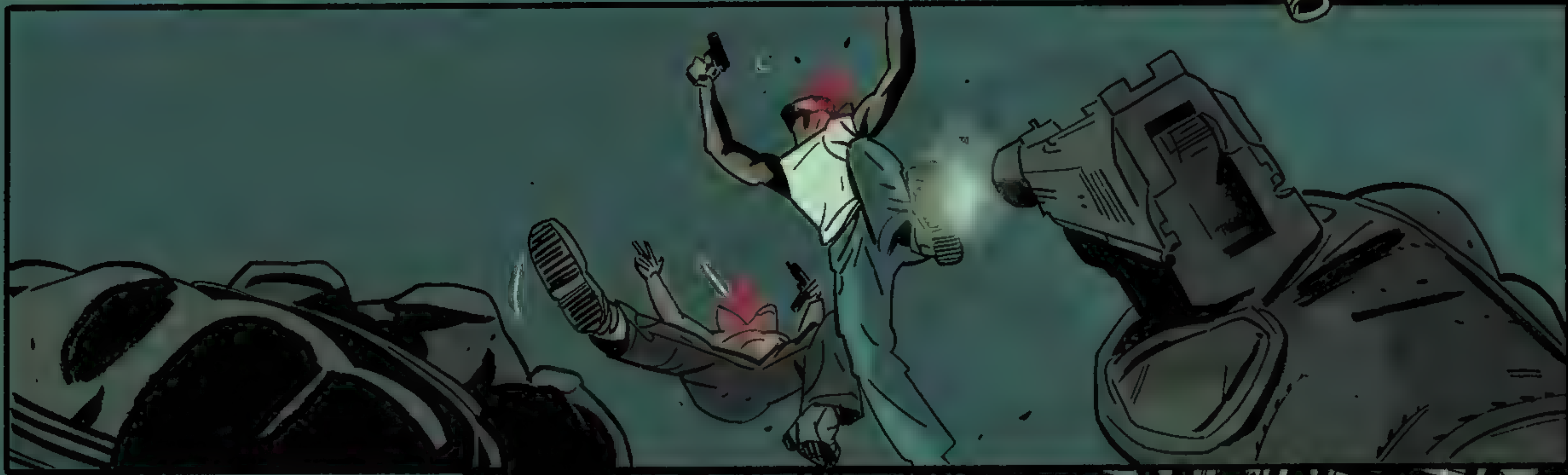
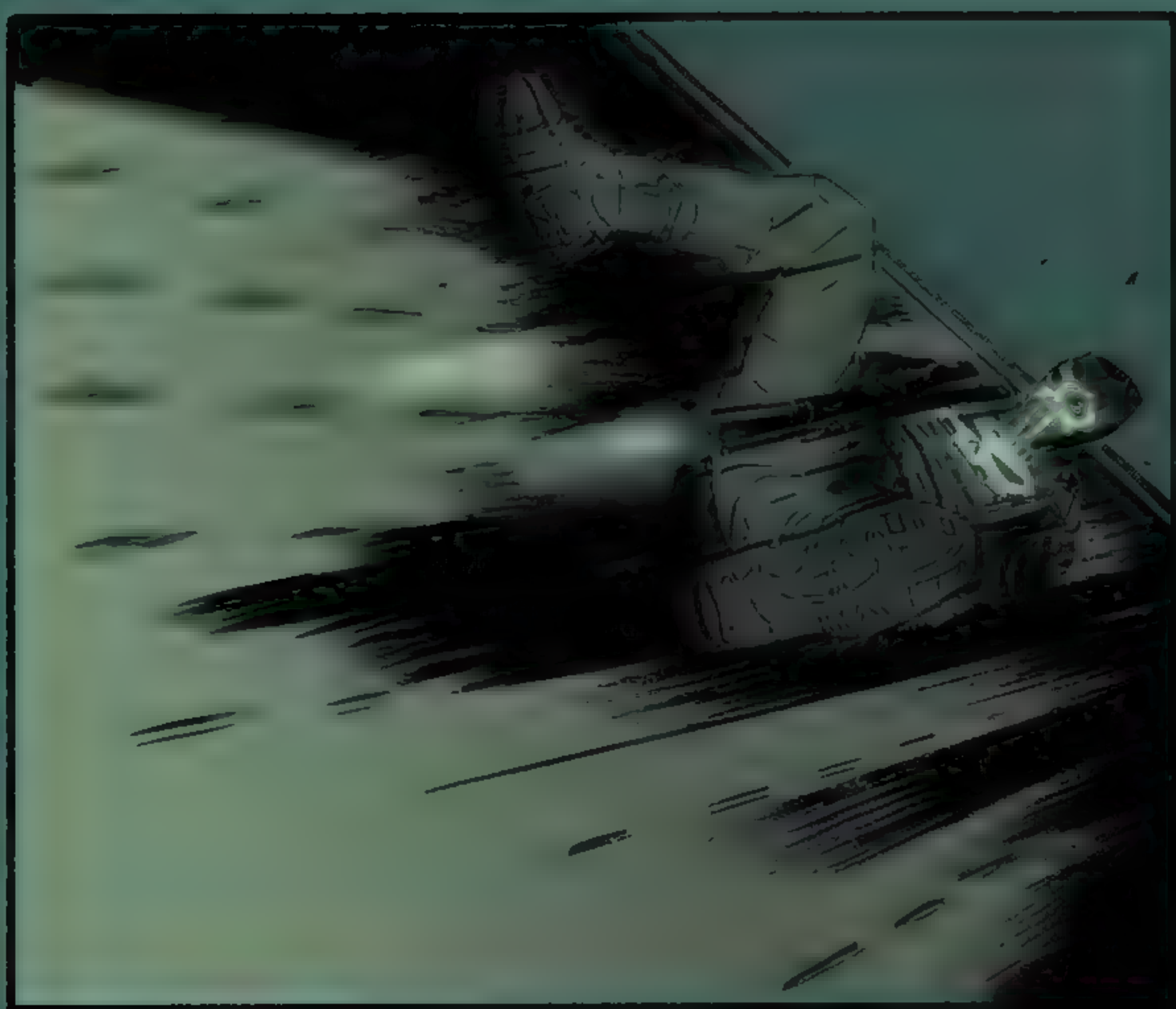


IT'S PURE INSTINCT
AND IT IS ABSOLUTELY
TO BE TRUSTED.

BUT...WELL,
DAMN IT.









THWACK



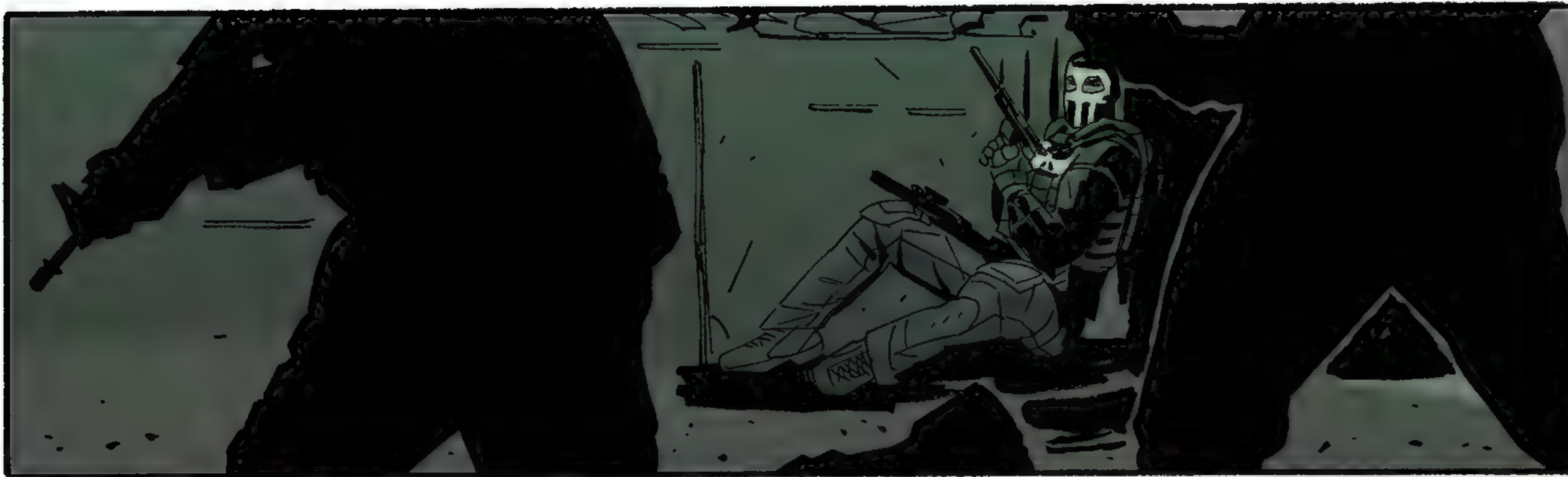
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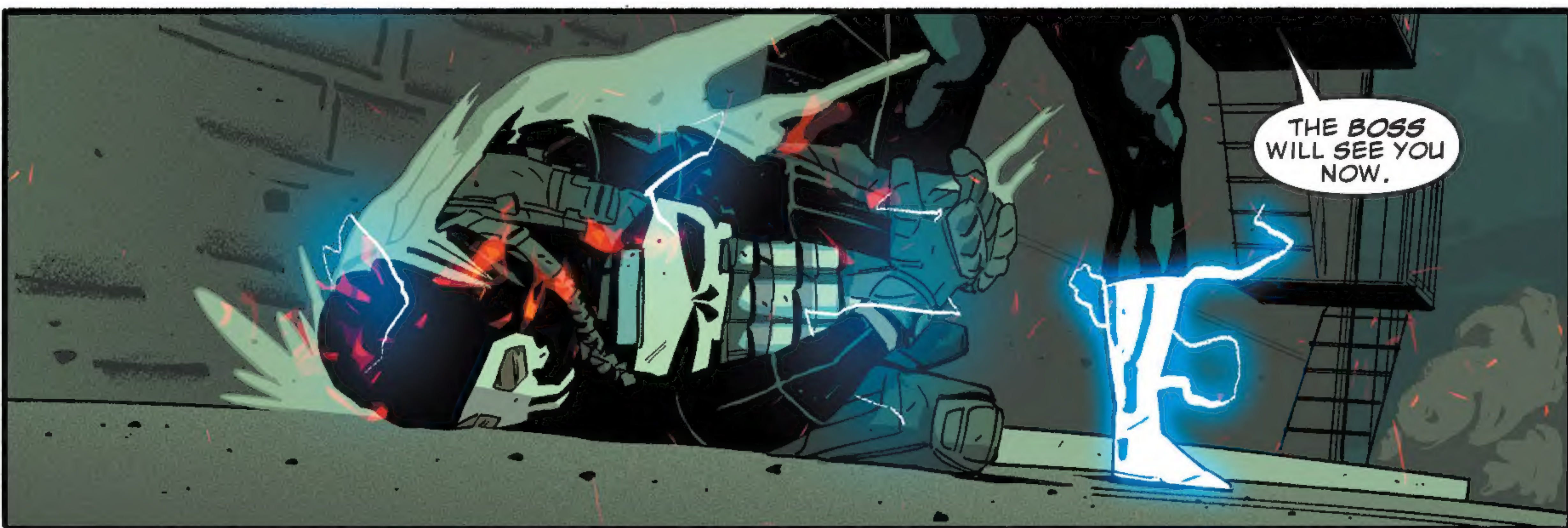


THIS ISN'T
PUNISHMENT,
IT'S NOT
JUSTICE.



IT'S
EXTERMINATION.







STINGS,
DOESN'T
IT?

IT WILL
GET WORSE.
MR. DEL SOL WOULD
LIKE TO HAVE A
WORD. AND I'LL
MAKE *SURE* YOU
ANSWER HIM.



THE PUNISHER

WRITING ON THE CASTLE WALLS

Hello, Frank-ophiles! As we're readying PUNISHER #3 to head out the door here at HQ, issue #1 has just hit the stands, and the reaction has been overwhelmingly positive! In a week full of huge releases from Marvel, it means a lot to us that you guys chose to grab our book. (Speaking of, did you guys check out those other #1s? WOLVERINE, LOKI: AGENT OF ASGARD and MS. MARVEL were all pretty darned stellar, IMHO. What a great time to be a Marvelite!) We were also thrilled to get so much mail! Speaking of which, let's get to those letters...

Dear Punisher Crew,

Nathan Edmondson knows how to write a great Punisher comic! After reading the first issue, I was eager to write and let you know how much I enjoyed THE PUNISHER, and I can't wait to read future issues. Given his lethal "take no prisoners" approach to fighting crime, Frank Castle is going to come into conflict with law enforcement authorities, and the appearance of the legendary Howling Commandoes at the end of the comic was a big surprise. Although Edmondson's script was riveting, I also have to give some praise to artist Mitch Gerads, whose renderings captured all the action perfectly.

Reed Beebe
Kansas City, Missouri

The Reverend Mr. Beebe!!! Any ROOM WITH A VIEW fans in the house? No? Funny, I'd have thought there would be a lot of crossover with Punisher and E.M. Forster fans... Regardless, glad you dug the issue, Reed! You're one of our most vocal readers, it'd have been a real bummer if you hadn't. Keep it real in Kansas City, Missouri, the most confusingly named city in the U.S.

Dear Punisher Team,

I just read the first issue of the new Punisher series from Nathan Edmondson and Mitch Gerads and I have to say I really enjoyed it. As a lifelong fan of Frank and his mission, I enjoyed how Edmondson took him to some place new in both location and in terms of his view on his mission. The art from Gerads was simply gorgeous too, some of my favorite Punisher art I've ever seen. The visual aesthetic of the book feels just right considering the change in location and tone.

However, one thing I was wondering with the change in location was if we'll see Rachel Alves at all during this series? I ask because the last time we saw Frank in his own book and not in Thunderbolts or Superior Team-Up was when Greg Rucka wrote the War Zone miniseries, which ended with Frank imprisoned and Rachel Alves taking up the

Punisher mantle in L.A. Will that ending be addressed at all? Rucka's run with the Punisher character with Marco Checchetto and later Carmine di Giandomenico actually stands as my favorite run with the character and I would hate to see all the great work put into that series lost to time.

Thank you for your time,
WhizBang

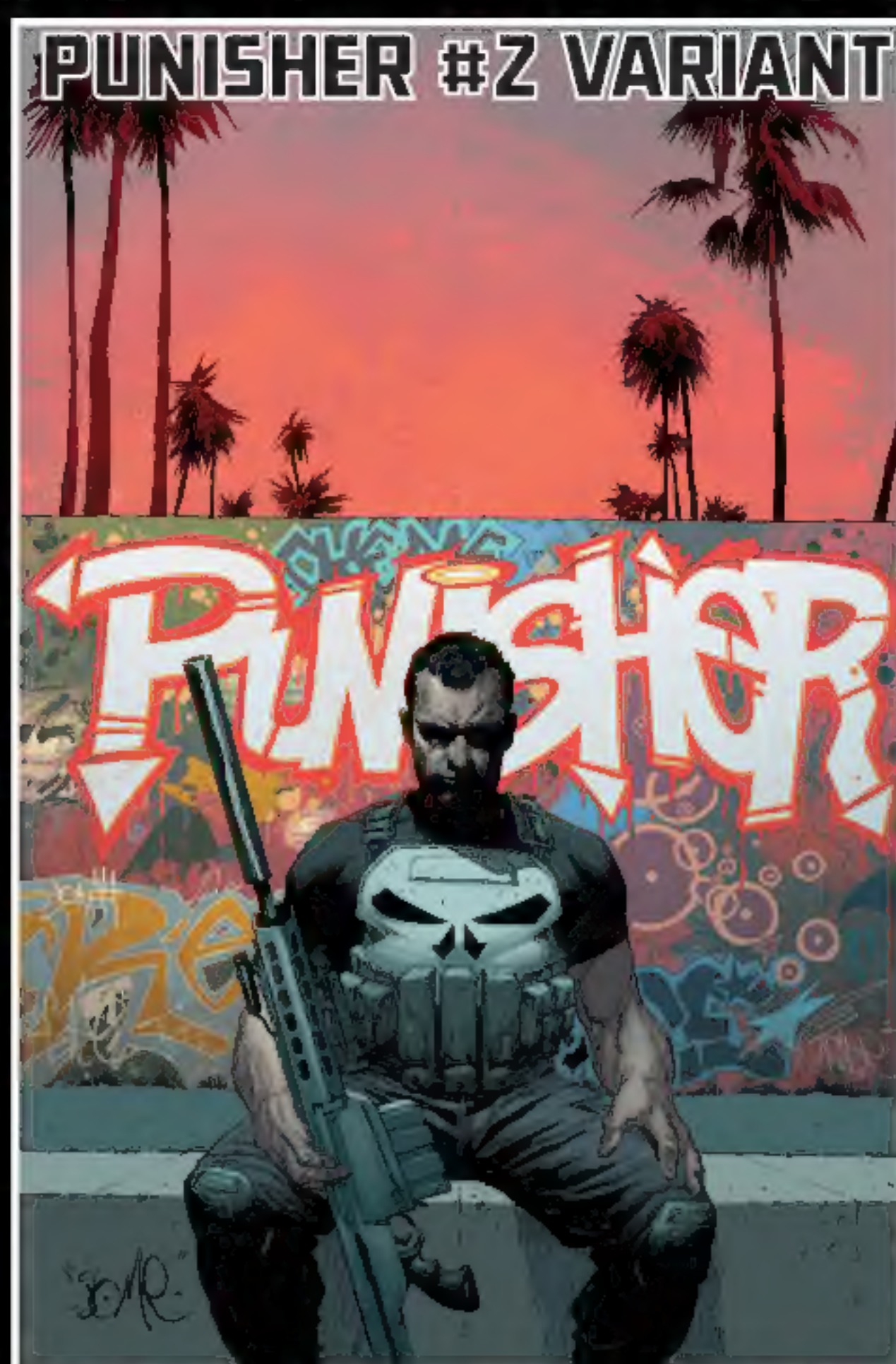
Rachel Cole Alv-who? Greg Ruckawhut? Just kidding, don't have a coronary, internets. Everyone here at Punisher HQ is a big fan of Rucka's run, particularly Rachel Cole Alves. What that means is we've certainly discussed Rachel and we'd all really love to bring her in, but we also want to make sure that if and when we do, we do it RIGHT. So for now, all I can say is we're certainly on your side, WhizBang, and hopefully we can and will do right by you and all the other Rachel fans out there.

Great first issue! loving the new Frank. Reminds me a bit of PUNISHER MAX. Coming off the trail of the Punisher a few months ago this is fan-freaking- tastic!

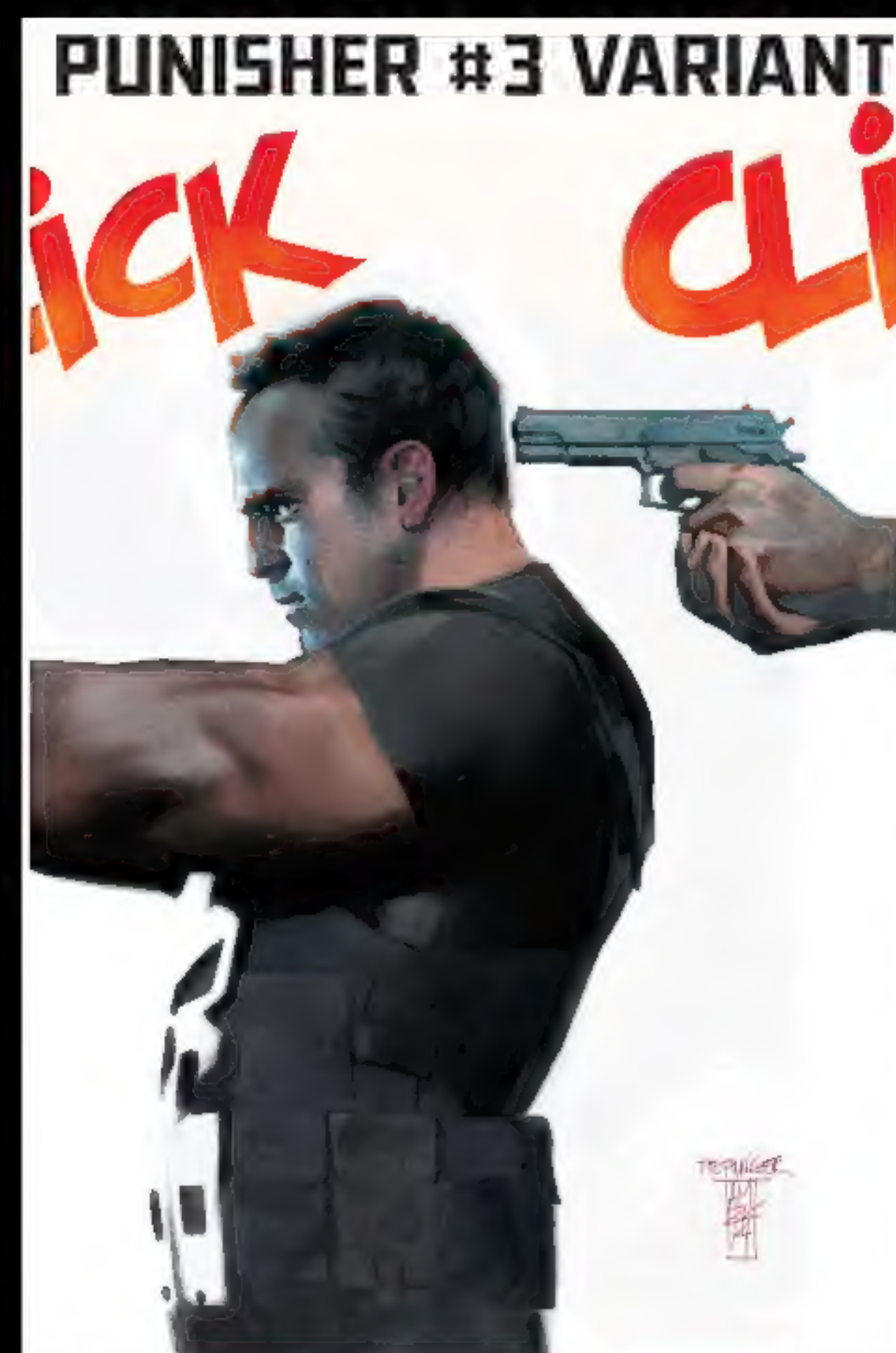
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**SALVADOR LARROCA
& FRANK MARTIN**



**JEROME OPENA &
FRANK MARTIN**



ALEX MALEEV

P-THE PUNISHER

WRITING ON THE CASTLE WALLS

The art is top notch and the writing is excellent. Who doesn't love the idea of L.A. being the new playground for the Punisher.

Love the Big BOOMS and the jokes. Nothing better than some gratuitous violence with my Frank Castle!!!

Hopefully we get to see some Marvel heroes bumping into the Punisher.

Awesome work!

Brendon

Nathan's very invested in having Punisher both live in his own space and also position that space within the greater Marvel U. Consequently, I happen to know there are plans for Frank to meet up with some Marvel U. heavy hitters, including one showdown I'm so excited about I can barely contain myself! You see, what happens is...NO! No, I can't! But it's going to be SO awesome whenNO! NO! STOP IT, JAKE! Don't ruin the surprise!

Hello Punished Ones,

Since Marvel NOW started I had been longing for a Punisher book, getting what little of him I can in Thunderbolts, sigh. So seeing this All New Marvel Now #1 ongoing is like Christmas in February! I loved the issue. Loved the explosions. Loved the silencer "PCH" kills...made me feel like I was a CoD Ghost operator. The cover for issue #1 is AWESOME. The cover for issue #2 looks AWESOME. Thank you, thank you, thank you for bringing back the Punisher in grand Frank fashion! My only question is... will we see Frank take on a few teammates?

-John III

Well, Johnny Triple-I, as I and all your friends and relatives are now going to call you, you've been introduced to Tuggs already, and Frank may be getting a few more allies yet. But historically speaking it's hard to stay friends with Frank for long, so soak up the team while you can! And those covers are pretty epic, no? That

Mitch Gerads, he's an unstoppable force of artistic bad-assery!

I had no intention of picking up PUNISHER this week. Just finished reading the All New Now issue one. I liked it. Sorry to say I'm still not sold on the series as of yet. But from what I've seen thus far I might just be back for more. Maybe. Keep up the great work.

Henri, FI

Hopefully we've got you good and snagged at this point! I mean, c'mon! Electro! Gang warfare! A.I.M.! The Howling Commandos! What's an editor gotta do??? Does printing your letter help seal the deal, Henri? We're not above kowtowing. We will straight-up tow that kow if need be.

Hey,

How is the Punisher not dead after the completion of the Max series or is this a different timeline?

Like many I am a huge fan of the Max series as well as many other story arcs. They were edgy, deep and violent. All scum in his way was taken out but anyone and anything he had to lose was taken from him. Will this series be keeping a similar tone? Are his new friends in for a fight for their lives just for knowing him?

I think a great Punisher story can't have a happy ending because all wars have consequences and civilian casualties. It also needs a high body count.

The Punisher is added to my box at the comic shop. Keep it there and impress me.

Thanks,

Kent Bowker
Australia

Kent, you and Henri drive some hard bargains. Hope you're impressed! Also, to answer your question, the MAX line is a separate reality from the Marvel "616" reality, so as much as I love those stories, and man oh man do I LOOOOOOOVE those stories,

their reality won't be reflected here. But worry not, Nathan and Mitch are dedicated to putting Frank and anyone who hitches their wagon to him through one hell of a ringer.

This Punisher series is the way it should be. Frank Castle, simply a man, no super powers, no extra worldly elements, fueled by psychotic rage and a need to punish. Because of his purely human dimension and character, he is the only Marvel character I follow and have followed him since my son introduced me to him in the early 90s. The look of the series and the writing is great, so don't stop.

Paul K.

My dad's a Punisher fan as well! Nothing's better than a father and son bonding over psychotic violence. I hope you and your son are both getting a kick out of the new series, Paul!

That's all for now. Keep sending your letters to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and remember to mark them "OK TO PRINT!" See you all next month for #4!

-Jake T.

NEXT:

